



## Deadline Approaching for Producers First Assistance

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MADISON – Time is running out for Wisconsin food producers to apply for technical assistance through Producers First this season. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has set April 25 as the Producers First application deadline.

The goal of Producers First is to expand Wisconsin's local food markets by building producer capacity, efficiency and sales. Producers First provides funding for producers to access individualized technical assistance. Examples of technical assistance include: accounting, financial organization, business planning, facility design, food safety, grant writing, legal services, market development, packaging development, label design and whole farm planning.

Producers are able to choose a technical assistance provider with the experience and expertise needed for their individual operation. DATCP provides a database of possible consultants as a reference if desired. Producers First will provide up to \$3,000 for a consultant to provide this assistance. Producers must make a matching payment of at least 10%.

To apply, producers must first complete a short online questionnaire. Information requested includes type of food produced, revenue generated in the last three years, years in production, markets used and type of technical assistance needed.

Producers submitting questionnaires that meet eligibility requirements will be invited to submit an application. Producers should aim to submit the online questionnaire a couple weeks prior to the application deadline to give an ample amount of time to complete the full application.

All applications received before the deadline will be evaluated for funding by a competitive review process. Since 2010, thirty-five producers from across the state have received technical assistance through Producers First.

For the questionnaire and other information about Producers First, visit

[http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Buy\\_Local\\_Buy\\_Wisconsin/Producers\\_First](http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Buy_Local_Buy_Wisconsin/Producers_First). To learn more, contact Keefe Keeley at [datcpproducersfirst@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcpproducersfirst@wisconsin.gov) or 608-224-5095. You can also connect with DATCP on Twitter at [twitter.com/widatcp](https://twitter.com/widatcp) or Facebook at [facebook.com/widatcp](https://facebook.com/widatcp).

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